

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8442
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NY
USICA WASHDC

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E.M 11652: NA
TAGS: SOPN, SY
SUBJECT: SUBDUED SYRIAN COMMENTARY ON ISRAEL'S WEST BANK REPLY

1. IN COMMENTING ON THE ISRAELI CABINET'S REPLY TO THE US
CONCERNING THE WEST BANK, THE SYRIAN PRESS JUNE 20 IS
RELATIVELY SUBDUED, PERHAPS, BELIEVING THAT THE REPLY IS IN
ITSELF SUFFICIENTLY DAMNING OF SADAT'S INITIATIVE TO REQUIRE
LITTLE MORE THAN A FEW VERBAL BARBS.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: ISRAEL'S REPLY IS LEAD STORY
IN AL-THAWRA (WHILE OTHER TWO DAILIES HIGHLIGHT AMBASSADOR
SAAD SHAZLI'S ANTI-SADAT REMARKS). HEADLINE READS: "ZIONIST
REPLY CONCERNING THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK AND THE STRIP
IS A NEW PHASE OF THE CONSPIRACY...WEIZMAN: IT IS NECESSARY
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TO PREPARE FOR THE COMING BATTLE AFTER THE REPLY TO
AMERICA'S QUESTIONS." THE ARTICLES STATES THAT WHILE ALL
THE SADAT REGIME COULD DO WAS TO EXPRESS REGRET AT THE
FAILURE OF THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT TO REPLY POSITIVELY, THE
PLO AND WEST BANK LEADERS ANNOUNCED THEIR REJECTION OF THE
THREE POINTS CONTAINED IN THE REPLY. ARTICLE GOES ON TO
CATALOG NEGATIVE REACTIONS TO REPLY FROM VARIOUS QUARTERS.

3. IN COMMENTING ON THE REPLY, AN EDITORIAL IN TISHRIIN CLAIMED THAT IT WAS "INTENDED TO BE A NEW INCENTIVE TO A SETTLEMENT OF CAPITULATION BETWEEN SADAT AND ISRAEL AND (SERVE) AS AN APPROPRIATE BASIS TO STIMULATE THE AMERICAN ROLE IN THE ALLEGED PEACE PROCESS...THE FIRST IMPRESSION AIRED BY COMMENTATORS WORLDWIDE IS THAT THE REPLY CANNOT BE A CATALYST EVEN FOR THE US DESIRE TO STIMULATE THE PROCESS OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT BETWEEN THE SADAT REGIME AND ISRAEL, AND THAT IT FALLS SHORT OF THE MINIMUM REQUIRED TO GIVE THE SADAT REGIME A PRETEXT FOR JUSTIFYING ITS CONTINUATION OF THE COURSE OF CAPITULATION...ISRAEL IS SAYING TO THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY TO THE ARABS, 'EITHER ACCEPT MY TERMS FOR ANNEXATION, OCCUPATION, AND THE DENIAL OF RIGHTS OR ELSE COME FORWARD AND FIGHT ISRAEL,' WHICH US WEAPONS HAVE MADE A VAST FIGHTING FORCE."

4. AN EDITORIAL IN AL-BAATH DEALING WITH DAYAN'S CLARIFICATIONS OF ISRAEL'S REPLY ASSERTS THAT: "IN BRIEF, ISRAEL REFUSES TO END ITS CONTROL OVER THE WEST BANK AND THE GAZA STRIP AND THE CONFEDERATION IT PROPOSES AS A POLITICAL FRAMEWORK FOR RESOLVING THE FATE OF THE PALESTINIANS IS PRIMARILY DESIGNED TO KEEP THE PALESTINIANS UNDER ISRAELI MILITARY AND POLITICAL CONTROL AND TO REFUSE TO DISCUSS THE PALESTINIANS' RIGHT TO SET UP THEIR OWN IDEPENDENT NATIONAL ENTITY." END UNCLASSIFIED
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5. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE SYRIAN OFFICIALS ARE PLEASED WITH ISRAEL'S REPLY, BELIEVING THAT IT BRINGS CLOSER THE DAY WHEN SADAT WILL HAVE TO ABANDON HIS INITIATIVE. HOWEVER, SYRIANS MAY BE APPREHENSIVE THAT A US PROPOSAL COULD STILL SAVE SADAT'S INITIATIVE.
PELLETREAU

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